

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6042
DEPARTMENT TREASURY IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, EGEN, GW, US
SUBJECT: DER SPIEGEL ARTICLE ON BONN-WASHINGTON
RELATIONS

1. THE EMBASSY WISHES TO CALL TO THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION AN ARTICLE ON USG-FRG RELATIONS IN THE FEBRUARY 20 EDITION OF DER SPIEGEL. FBIS 200923Y CARRIES THE FULL TRANSLATION. IN ADDITION, USIS HAS FILED A FULL TRANSLATION THROUGH ITS CHANNELS.
 2. TITLED "NOTHING BUT CONTEMPT", THE ARTICLE PLACES PRIMARY BLAME ON CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT FOR THE ALLEGEDLY TENSE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN BONN AND WASHINGTON. IT FOCUSES ON USG-FRG DIFFERENCES IN MACROECONOMIC POLICY AND COMMENTS AT LENGTH ON SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL'S
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RECENT MEETING WITH SCHMIDT, QUOTING "AN AMERICAN" AS SAYING THAT SCHMIDT HAD MADE BLUMENTHAL FEEL "NOTHING BUT CONTEMPT." THE ARTICLE ALSO MENTIONS HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR DEAL. THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THAT SCHMIDT'S ROUGH-HEWN TREATMENT OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS LED SEVERAL OF HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES, INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER AND DEFENSE (FORMERLY

FINANCE) MINISTER APEL, TO COUNSEL MODERATION FOR THE
SAKE OF RESTORING HARMONY IN BILATERAL RELATIONS.
ACCORDING TO DER SPIEGEL'S ACCOUNT, SCHMIDT HAS AGREED
TO DESIST FROM NEW GROUSING ABOUT USG POLICIES AND
LEADERS IF WASHINGTON DROPS ITS CAMPAIGN TO FORCE A
CHANGE IN BONN'S ECONOMIC POLICY.

3. DER SPIEGEL IS EXPECTED TO PUBLISH A COVER STORY
ON USG-FRG RELATIONS IN THE COMING WEEKS.

4. THE ARTICLE IN DER SPIEGEL WAS DISCUSSED DURING THE
FEBRUARY 20 PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE FRG SPOKESMEN
GRUENEWALD AND BOELLING. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS OCCURRED:

"(Q) CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONFIRM THE TENSION IN
RELATIONS BETWEEN BONN AND WASHINGTON AS REPORTED TODAY
IN DER SPIEGEL?

(A) NO, NOT AT ALL.

(A) NOT IN THIS FORM. THIS STORY ARISES FROM THE NEED
FOR DRAMA. ONE MUST RESPECT AND TOLERATE THIS NEED,
BUT THE THRUST OF THIS STORY HAS ABSOLUTELY NO--I
REPEAT, ABSOLUTELY NO--RELATIONSHIP TO THE COURSE OF
THE DISCUSSIONS. IT IS INDEED AS MR. BLUMENTHAL SAID
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AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE U.S.: THERE WERE NO DEMANDS
THAT (WE) ASSUME 'LOCOMOTIVE FUNCTIONS'. THE POSITION
OF THE CHANCELLOR IN THIS STORY...IS REPORTED INCORRECT-
LY.

(Q) IS THE PORTRAYAL OF SCHMIDT'S ATTITUDE TO THE
AMERICAN PRESIDENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FACTS?

(A) THIS PORTRAYAL IS AN ABSOLUTE CARICATURE.

(Q) ...IS THERE AN ELEMENT OF TRUTH IN THIS
CARICATURE?

(A) WE POINTED OUT LAST WEEK THAT THERE ARE DIFFER-
ENCES OF VIEW. HOWEVER, AFTER THE MEETING (BETWEEN
SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT), THESE
DIFFERENCES WERE OVER-DRAMATIZED IN AN UNACCEPTABLE
WAY, AS I SAID LAST WEEK."
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